

## JEFF SEENEY BROADWATER Q&A

# ODDS FAVOUR RULING DELAYS



Deputy Premier Jeff Seehey (above) denies there is a political motive for delaying a decision on the ASF consortium's proposal (below).

AN announcement on the future of the Broadwater Marine Project was supposed to be made by now. What went wrong? Deputy Premier Jeff Seehey tells Paul Weston the road ahead.

**Bulletin:** Where are you at (with the project) ... there won't be a decision before February.

Jeff Seehey: I suppose there's a number of opportunities to decide whether we proceed further. And I guess at any of those decision points we could decide not to proceed further. But I don't foresee that. We are committed to ensuring this process settles the question once and for all. I think the last government that looked at this made a political decision in the run-up to the election. That's not my intention. At the end of this process I want to be sure that we all understand everything there is to understand about the challenges of establishing a cruise ship terminal. Whether those challenges can be successfully met or not comes down to the proponent.

**B:** So a lot of what you're saying there comes down the technical aspect of operating, getting cruise ships in.

JS: First and foremost it is about getting a cruise ship into the Broadwater and being able to provide an access for passengers on the ship to the Gold Coast business community, all the attractions. After that, there is a whole range of other issues related to the whole size of the development that is being proposed as a way of funding the cruise ship terminal.

**B:** The (probity on the)



**casino licence and so forth, which is out of your (State Development's) realm.**

JS: No, the casino licence, the residential developments being proposed, brings a whole lot of challenges ... around service provision, traffic issues, the effect on the established market. Then there is the environmental challenges of dredging in the

next decision point will be whether we proceed to a formal EIS for example, that's in relation to environmental issues. It's complex ... there's certainly no anticipation from me or the Government that it is something that is going to be resolved quickly.

**B:** So we're looking obviously some time well into next year.

the next one will in relation to environmental issues, will be around the EIS. The Government has to be confident or at least we have to be convinced that there is at least a reasonable or average chance of getting a reasonable outcome. Otherwise you wouldn't commit the money that's required. To do an EIS study of the complexity of

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Broadwater and keeping the access channel open on a 24/7, 12 months a year basis. There is a whole lot of work that has to be done on that.

**B:** So they've (the proponent ASF) done some navigational studies, and they've presented them to State Development. Do you need more?

JS: Much, much more. That's why I say there is a series of decision points. The

JS: Certainly, it could well be longer than that. A proper environmental impact statement could be expected to take a couple of years.

**B:** Where are you placed with the proponent in giving at some stage advice to them, that we've reached a certain point here, we don't believe this is ...

JS: I'm very conscious of that, that there will be a number of decision points. I think

that would be required will cost a lot of money.

**B:** So you would advise them on the likelihood of an EIS being successful rather than they go through the process.

JS: I'd be making sure they understand the risks. If they are going to undertake an EIS, they have to understand that that's not an approval, that it's just the next step in the process.

**B:** So the view that the Government could make a decision before the election and it would hurt them electorally, is in fact a wrong view. You're taking this on a purely technical basis.

JS: I'm taking the opportunity to tell you that it won't be before the election.

**B:** And that's not because you fear you will lose seats and it will be electorally damaging.

JS: As I said, we undertook to complete a very detailed and sophisticated process to determine once and for all what's involved in establishing a cruise ship in the Broadwater. At the end of this process I want have a very clear understanding, of what the technical issues are, what the environmental issues are and what the challenges are. How far the proponent wants to go in that process depends on the results in this process. I can tell you it has nothing to do with the election.

**B:** Has State Development got enough information in the coming months to send that reply to the proponent to say "I'm sorry" or "yes this will be OK"?

JS: We will be identifying what information we need in the next step in the process, we will be explaining to the proponent that this is the next step in the process, it will be up to them to decide whether to proceed or not.

**B:** Will you be speaking to council about this at any stage, or is it purely State Development.

JS: It is something we will talk about to council regularly, especially when we get down to the final detail about water, sewerage and traffic. They have much more to do with council than with us.